

1 SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 4

2 INTRODUCED BY CURTISS, BALES, VINCENT, HEINERT, GEBHARDT

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4 A JOINT RESOLUTION OF THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF
5 MONTANA URGING THE U.S. CONGRESS TO REAUTHORIZE THE SECURE RURAL SCHOOLS AND
6 COMMUNITY SELF-DETERMINATION ACT AND WORK TOWARD A PERMANENT SOLUTION TO
7 COMPENSATE STATES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS FOR LOST TAX REVENUE ON FEDERAL LAND
8 WITHIN MONTANA.

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10 WHEREAS, the stability of Montana's economy has historically been dependent on use of our abundant
11 natural resources; and

12 WHEREAS, the natural resource harvest has historically contributed billions of dollars to Montana's
13 economy by providing employment opportunities to members of our communities, supporting our business
14 communities, and contributing to the health of our schools; and

15 WHEREAS, revenue from industries related to the natural resource harvest has produced taxes for the
16 support of local and state governments; and

17 WHEREAS, the amount of money generated by national forests has dropped more than 85% between
18 1986 and 2005, creating a financial crisis for rural forest communities in Montana and around the country; and

19 WHEREAS, Congress passed the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000
20 to provide a safety net for these communities, and the purpose of the Act was to stabilize payments to states and
21 counties to help support roads and schools, provide projects that enhance forest ecosystem health, provide
22 employment opportunities, and improve cooperative relationships among federal land management agencies and
23 those who use and care about the lands that the agencies manage; and

24 WHEREAS, counties in Montana received more than \$14 million in the last year to maintain schools and
25 roads; and

26 WHEREAS, the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act has expired; and

27 WHEREAS, if the Act is not reauthorized, many counties will suffer severe financial impacts resulting in
28 significant reduction in services, including but not limited to public safety and education.

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30 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE

1 STATE OF MONTANA:

2 (1) That the Legislature of the State of Montana urge the U.S. Congress to reauthorize the Secure Rural
3 Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000 and work toward a permanent solution to compensate
4 states and local governments for lost tax revenue on federal land within Montana.

5 (2) That the Secretary of State send copies of this resolution to the President of the United States, the
6 Secretary of State of the United States, the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the United
7 States House of Representatives, the Western Governors' Association, and the Montana Congressional
8 Delegation.

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